

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 041401

41

ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /020 R

DRAFTED BY INR/RWE:JFHOSTIE;INR/RSE:EWILLENZ

APPROVED BY INR/DDR:MPACKMAN

EUR/WE:WMARSH

EUR/RPM:DJONES

EUR/NE:PCANNEY

EUR/RPE:RHOMME

EUR/SOV:BZOOK

EUR/CE:KKURZE

-

----- 052824

R 202015Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 041401

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: FR, XG, UR, PINT

SUBJECT:22ND FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS: EVOLUTION
AND TACTICS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 041401

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INR REPORT NO. 322, DATED FEBRUARY

17, 1976, AND ENTITLED AS ABOVE.

2. BEGIN TEXT

3. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY'S 22ND CONGRESS, FEBRUARY 4-8, ENDED WITH UNANIMOUS APPROVAL FOR CHANGING THE PARTY'S IMAGE INTO ONE OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE DOCTRINAIRE MARXISM OF THE SOVIET UNION. SINCE THE MEETING, THE PCF HAS DECIDED NOT TO SEND SECRETARY-GENERAL GEORGES MARCHAIS TO THE 25TH SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS.

4. THIS STAGE IN THE EVOLUTION OF PCF RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND OTHER POLITICAL FORCES IN FRANCE COMES FROM THE CONVICTIONS THAT:

(A)--THE PCF MUST APPEAR AS A CREDIBLE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN ORDER TO COMPETE WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS);

(B)--RECENT SOVIET POLICY HAS BENEFITED THE GISCARD GOVERNMENT MORE THAN THE PCF; AND

(C)--THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY'S TACTICS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

5. BASIC TENET DROPPED: PROBABLY THE MOST DRAMATIC ACT OF THE CONGRESS WAS THE UNANIMOUS DECISION TO ELIMINATE ONE OF THE BASIC TENETS OF MARXISM-LENINISM, "THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT," FROM THE PARTY STATUTES. MARCHAIS ALSO CRITICIZED SOVIET EFFORTS TO SUBJECT COMMUNIST PARTIES TO A "UNIFORM DOGMA" AND CHIDED THE USSR, AND EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST REGIMES AS WELL, FOR THEIR RESTRICTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. THE MAIN THRUST OF MARCHAIS' FOUR-HOUR-LONG SPEECH WAS TO CAST THE PCF IN A NEW "DEMOCRATIC" LIGHT. HE REITERATED THE PARTY'S ADHERENCE TO THE PROCESS OF ELECTIONS IN ITS PURSUIT OF POWER AND ITS READINESS TO EXTEND A WELCOME TO ALL SECTORS OF THE FRENCH PUBLIC, SAVE FOR THE RICHEST AND THEIR "FLUNKIES." HE ALSO STATED THAT THE PCF INTENDED TO KEEP ITS ELECTORAL AGREEMENT WITH THE SOCIALISTS--THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 041401

PARTY'S STRATEGY FOR COMING TO POWER.

7. PCF OBJECTIVES: THE 22ND CONGRESS IS AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS THAT THE PCF HAS BEEN UNDERGOING FOR ALMOST A DECADE. IT CLIMAXES MANY EFFORTS BY THE FRENCH COMMUNISTS TO BREAK OUT OF THEIR DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISOLATION AND, RECENTLY, TO GAIN A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE THAN THE SOCIALISTS IN ANY FUTURE GOVERNMENT DOMINATED

BY THE LEFT. THE PCF HAS SOUGHT TO BROADEN ITS APPEAL AMONG FRENCH VOTERS BY REJECTING THE ALLEGEDLY MORE "SECTARIAN" UNION OF THE LEFT APPROACH FAVORED BY THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS AND BY EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF MULTIPLE PARTY DEMOCRACY.

8. THE LATEST PCF STEP AWAY FROM THE NARROW STRICTURES OF SOVIET DOGMA COMES AFTER OTHER EXAMPLES OF THE PARTY'S GRADUAL DISTANCING FROM MOSCOW:

(A)--CRITICISM OF THE SOVIET UNION FOR THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968;

(B)--POLITICAL ALLIANCE WITH THE SOCIALISTS, WHICH CULMINATED IN A COMMON PROGRAM IN 1972;

(C)--SUPPORT OF MITTERRAND AS A JOINT CANDIDATE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 1974;

(D)--ADOPTION IN MAY 1975 OF A CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS THAT ENDORSED THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL, PERSONAL, RELIGIOUS, AND ARTISTIC FREEDOMS;

(E)--SIGNATURE IN NOVEMBER 1975 OF A JOINT DECLARATION OF BASIC POLITICAL PRINCIPLES WITH THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) THAT ENDORSED A PLURALISTIC POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE NOTION OF ALTERNATING POLITICAL POWER;

(F)--PUBLIC CRITICISM OF SOVIET CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND SOVIET TREATMENT OF POLITICAL DISSENTERS; AND

(G)--REJECTION OF SOVIET PRESSURE FOR GREATER IDEOLOGICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DISCIPLINE AS PART OF THE PREPARATION

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 041401

FOR AN ALL-EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTY CONFERENCE.

9. WIDENING BREACH BETWEEN THE PCF AND MOSCOW: AT THE PCF CONGRESS, MARCHAIS ALTERNATED HIS ATTACKS ON BASIC MARXIST-LENINIST DOCTRINE WITH PRAISE FOR SOVIET ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR "PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM," BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PCF AND MOSCOW HAD COOLED CONSIDERABLY. BY PROHIBITING FOR THE FIRST TIME ALL FRATERNAL PARTY DELEGATIONS FROM ADDRESSING THE CONGRESS DIRECTLY, THE PCF UNDERScoreD THE SERIOUSNESS OF ITS ESTRANGEMENT FROM MOSCOW.

10. CHIEF SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE, SECRETARY AND POLITBURO-MEMBER ANDREIJ KIRILENKO, WAS REDUCED TO VENTING HIS TRANSPARENT DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE NEW LINE OF THE PCF AT

A PUBLIC MEETING IN NANTERRE. THERE KIRILENKO LASHED OUT AGAINST THOSE WHO SOUGHT TO DISCREDIT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF "TRUE FREEDOM" IN THE SOVIET UNION AND RIDICULED THEM FOR ESPOUSING "SO-CALLED" LIBERTY THAT PERMITTED PORNOGRAPHY, RACISM, AND WAR PROPAGANDA.

11. SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN ACCOUNTS OF MARCHAIS' SPEECH GLOSSED OVER ITS ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS, WHILE THE USUAL FORMAL GREETINGS BY THESE PARTIES GENERALLY WERE LIMITED TO HORTATORY REFERENCES TO THE NEED FOR COMMUNIST UNITY.

12. WHILE THE PCF CONGRESS REFLECTS A GROWING DISENGAGEMENT OF THE PCF FROM MOSCOW, THE PARTY REMAINS COMMITTED TO MOST OF THE USSR'S FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES. HOWEVER, SUCH PCF SUPPORT FOR THE SOVIETS INCREASINGLY WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE PARTY'S DOMESTIC NEED TO REINFORCE A MORE DEMOCRATIC AND INDEPENDENT IMAGE.

13. PCF INTERNAL UNITY: IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE 21ST CONGRESS IN OCTOBER 1974, WHICH BROACHED THE THESES ADOPTED AT THE 22ND CONGRESS, MARCHAIS RAN INTO SHARP OPPOSITION FROM HARD-LINE MILITANTS IN THE PARTY. TO COMPENSATE, THE PCF LEADERSHIP, ALSO ALARMED BY THE FAST GROWTH OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, LAUNCHED AN INTENSE POLEMIC AGAINST THE PS AND APPEARED AT TIMES TO BE MORE DOGMATIC THAN EVER.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 041401

14. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT MARCHAIS WOULD NOW BREAK SO OPENLY WITH PCF PRECEDENT WITHOUT BEING FIRST ASSURED OF RANK-AND-FILE APPROVAL. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE NEW APPROACH PROBABLY HAS CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT AMONG BOTH PARTY FUNCTIONARIES AND MEMBERSHIP, ALTHOUGH OPPOSITION TO THE SECULARIZATION AND DOMESTICATION OF THE PCF CERTAINLY HAS NOT DISAPPEARED. THE CONSIDERABLE RESIDUE OF RANK-AND-FILE DOGMATISTS, PROBABLY ENCOURAGED BY THE SOVIETS AND STILL DISTRUSTFUL OF THE SOCIALISTS, MAY BALK AT THE NEW LINE AND THEREBY REDUCE THE DOMESTIC IMPACT OF THE CHANGES ADOPTED AT THE 22ND CONGRESS.

15. POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS: THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS, THE PARTY MOST AFFECTED BY CHANGES IN THE PCF, GAVE FAVORABLE, THOUGH CAUTIOUS, APPROVAL TO THE COMMUNISTS' EFFORTS TO PORTRAY THEMSELVES AS INCREASINGLY INDEPENDENT OF MOSCOW. NEAR THE CLOSE OF THE PCF CONGRESS, THE PS WEEKLY, L'UNITE, SUGGESTED THAT THE TWO PARTIES MIGHT NOW HAVE "A MORE SERIOUS DISCUSSION" OF THEIR DIFFERENCES, ALTHOUGH IT NOTED THAT SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT STILL DIVIDED THEM.

16. PCF'S NEW LOOK CANNOT YET BE FULLY MEASURED IN TERMS

OF ITS EFFECT ON FRENCH OPINION. RECENT POLLS INQUIRING INTO THE PUBLIC VIEW OF THE COMMUNISTS REVEAL THAT:

(A)--JUST BEFORE THE CONGRESS, 48 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION REGARDED THE PCF AS NOT A TRUSTWORTHY PARTICIPANT IN THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL SYSTEM;

(B)--49 PERCENT BELIEVED THAT THE COMMUNISTS' DROPPING DOCTRINES LIKE "THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" IS MORE AN ADJUSTMENT OF TERMINOLOGY THAN A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE; AND

(C)--WHILE THERE WAS WIDESPREAD DOUBT ABOUT THE READINESS OF THE COMMUNISTS TO SHARE POWER WERE THEY TO ENTER GOVERNMENT, 46 PERCENT OF THE PUBLIC FAVORED PCF PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT WITHIN FIVE YEARS (UP FROM 31 PERCENT IN 1964). MOST OF THOSE WHO FAVORED PCF PARTICIPATION IN

GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, WANTED THE COMMUNISTS CONFINED TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 06 STATE 041401

SUCH MINISTRIES AS LABOR, HEALTH, INDUSTRY, AND AGRICULTURE. INGERSOLL

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING REPORTS, COMMUNIST MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE041401
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JFHOSTIE;INR/RSE:EWILLENZ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760065-0661
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760228/aaaaaymc.tel
Line Count: 250
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <31 MAR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 2ND FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS: EVOLUTION AND TACTICS
TAGS: PINT, FR, XG, UR
To: NATO BRUSSELS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006